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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at Mississippi Gulf Coast Junior College to determine the viability of open entry-open exit enrollment in vocational programs. Interviews were conducted with vocational education personnel at two campuses to determine the fulfillment of student objectives, drop-out rates, and graduate job placement in five programs (auto mechanics, machine shop, industrial electricity, and welding programs at both campuses). In 1977-78, the five programs were attended by 285 students, of whom 207 took advantage of the open entry-open exit policy and enrolled at other than the semester enrollment periods. Of these students, 99 continued in the program and graduated meeting all program requirements. Employment was not desired in the occupation for which they had trained by 18 graduates. The overall placement of those desiring employment was 97.53%. Of the original 285 students, 136 withdrew or dropped out; 70 for reasons of employment and 35 for reasons judged to be justifiable. Only 21 students dropped or withdrew due to lack of interest or excessive absences. A substantial number of the non-graduates obtained desired employment. Conclusions drawn from the study supported the open entry-open exit policy, as it enabled more students to be served. (MB)

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MISSISSIPPI
GULF COAST JUNIOR COLLEGE
CENTRAL OFFICE

Title: A STUDY OF OPEN ENTRY-OPEN EXIT PROGRAMS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Institutional Research Report No. 78/79-6

JANUARY 12, 1979

1. PROBLEM. The President asked Dr. Travis Ferguson, College Director of Vocational-Technical Programs, to make a study on open-entry, open-exit programs and to determine whether they were successful or not. The study done by Dr. Ferguson concludes, based on research identified in the appendices of the report, that open entry-open exit programs provide opportunities to more students than do those operated on the traditional semester basis.

2. DISCUSSION. Appreciation is noted to Dr. Ferguson for producing a fine research report and for making it available for publication.

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JC 790 302

MISSISSIPPI
GULF COAST JUNIOR COLLEGE
CENTRAL OFFICE

MEMO

TO: Dr. J.J. Hayden, Jr.

FROM: Travis Ferguson TCTF

RE: Study on Open Entry, Open Exit Programs in Vocational Education

DATE: November 20, 1978

We have completed the study on open entry, open exit programs in vocational education programs that you asked to be done. A copy is attached.

The format followed is that suggested in Administrative Handbook Statement # 234.

If any part of this study needs a verbal explanation, please let me know.

dl

xc: Office of Institutional Research and Planning ✓

A STUDY OF OPEN ENTRY-OPEN EXIT PROGRAMS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

by

R. Travis Ferguson

A Research Project on Open Entry-Open Exit Programs in Vocational Education
Conducted on the Request of President J.J. Hayden, Jr.

MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST JUNIOR COLLEGE

NOVEMBER, 1978

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
I	TITLE	1
II	PROBLEM STUDIED	1
III	METHODOLOGY AND DISCUSSION	1
	A. METHODOLOGY	1
	B. DISCUSSION	1
IV	SOURCES OF INFORMATION	4
V	CONCLUSIONS	4
VI	APPENDIXES	5-25
	A. LETTER INFORMING THE PERKINSTON CAMPUS EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE STUDY	5
	B. LETTER INFORMING THE JACKSON COUNTY EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE STUDY	6
	C. INFORMATION FORM	7
	D. INFORMATION ON INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICITY STUDENTS (JCC)	8-10
	E. INFORMATION ON WELDING STUDENTS (JCC)	11-17
	F. INFORMATION ON MACHINE SHOP STUDENTS (JCC)	18-20
	G. INFORMATION ON AUTOMOTIVE MECHANICS (PC)	21-22
	H. INFORMATION ON WELDING STUDENTS (PC)	23-25

I. TITLE

Open Entry-Open Exit Programs in Vocational Education

II. PROBLEM STUDIED

In a memorandum from President J.J. Hayden, Jr., dated October 17, 1978, directing that this study be done he raised two questions to be answered as follows:

1. Can it be shown that open entry, open exit programs work?
2. Can examples be cited over several years to show that more students are served rather than fewer?

III. METHODOLOGY AND DISCUSSION

A. METHODOLOGY

It was not intended to highlight one campus or center or programs over others. Therefore, to arrive at a decision on programs to study the statement and question to follow were put verbally to each of the four campus and center based vocational-technical education directors.

Statement - A study is being done on open entry, open exit programs.

Question - Do you feel that successful vocational education programs exists on your campus (center) that operate on an open entry, open exit basis?

The following programs were identified:

Welding - Perkinston
Automotive Mechanics - Perkinston
Carpentry - Perkinston
Printing - Perkinston
Industrial Electricity - Jackson County
Welding - Jackson County
Pipefitting/Plumbing - Jackson County
Machine Shop - Jackson County
Automotive Mechanics - Jackson County
Diesel Mechanics - Jackson County

Of the programs identified as successful by the campus (center) vocational-technical education directors, the following were selected by the researcher for the study:

Automotive Mechanics - Perkinston
Welding - Perkinston
Machine Shop - Jackson County
Industrial Electricity - Jackson County
Welding - Jackson County

Memorandums (see Appendixes A & B, p.5&6) were sent to the Executive Deans of the two campuses where the programs to be studied are located informing them of the study.

The following criteria was used to arrive at an answer to the question; can it be shown that open entry, open exit programs work?

Criteria - How successful were the programs in fulfilling the students' needs in consideration of their occupational-educational objectives, i.e., how many dropped out and why?; how many that dropped out were suitable for job placement and how many were successfully placed or found placement in the occupation in which training was received or a related occupation?

How many that graduated desired job placement and how many of those desiring job placement were successfully placed or found placement in the occupation in which training was received or a related occupation?

For compiling information from which answers to the above could be derived, a form (see Appendix C, page 7) was developed.

In addition, information from this form was used in discussing and answering the second question: Can examples be cited over several years to show that more students are served rather than fewer?

The scope of this study was discussed with the two campus vocational-technical education directors and they were asked to designate the person or persons who could supply the information required on the information form (see Appendix C, page 7).

Those individuals designated by the vocational-technical education directors were interviewed at which time the information was recorded (see Appendix D-H, pp 8- 25) on those students that attended the five programs studied during the period of July 1, 1976 - June 30, 1978.

B. DISCUSSION

Two hundred and eighty five (285) students attended (see Table I, p.3) , the five programs studied and 207 of those enrolled at other than the semester enrollment periods. However, some of the 207 that enrolled at times other than the semester enrollment periods did enroll, near those dates (see Appendix D-H, pp 8-25).

Of the 285 that were enrolled during the 1977 & 78 FY, fifty (see Table I, p. 3) continued into the 79 FY and ninety nine met all program requirements and graduated. Eighteen of those that graduated did not desire employment in the occupation trained or a related occupation. A close examination of appendixes D-H reveals that most of those that did not desire employment continued in some type of post-secondary education. Only one student that graduated who was known to have desired employment was not known to have found employment and one was classfied as unknown. The percentage that graduated who desired placement in three of the five programs studied was one hundred percent (100%). The overall placement for the five programs was ninety seven and fifty three one hundrets (97.53%) percent (see Table I, p 3).

One hundred and thirty six of the 285 that were enrolled during the 77 & 78 FY's, withdrew or dropped (didnot graduate). Seventy of those that withdrew or

TABLE I

OPEN ENTRY-OPEN EXIT

PROGRAMS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

	Jackson County				Perkinston			
	Industrial Electricity	Welding	Machine Shop	Total	Automotive Mechanics	Welding	Total	Grand Total
1. Number students in attendance July 1, 1978-June 30, 1978	51	118	49	218	26	41	67	285
2. Number that continued into FY 79	7	19	18	44	3	3	6	50
3. Number that graduated	30	19	15	64	14	21	35	99
4. Number that graduated who did not desire employment in occupation trained or a related occupation	10	0	3	13	4	1	5	18
5. Number that graduated who is known to have been employed in occupation trained or a related occupation	20	19	12	51	10	18	28	79
6. Number that graduated who desired placement but was not placed	0	0	0		0	1	1	1
7. Number status unknown - graduates	0	0	0		0	1	1	1
8. Percentage that graduated who desired employment in the occupation trained or related occupation and is known to have attained such employment (5 above / 3 above minus 4 above)	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	90 %	93.33 %	97.53 %
9. Number that withdrew or dropped (did not graduate)	14	80	16	110	9	17	26	136
10. Number that withdrew or dropped for reasons of employment	4	46	4	54	7	9	16	70
11. Number that dropped or withdrew due to lack of interest or excessive absences, etc.	7	9	2	18	0	3	3	21
12. Number that dropped or withdrew for reasons of family problems, health problems, etc (justifiable reasons)	2	18	10	30	1	4	5	35
13. Number status unknown. Withdrawals or dropouts - Reasons unknown	1	7	0	8	1	1	2	10
14. Number that enrolled at other than semister enrollment periods	48	102	38	188	7	12	19	207

dropped out did so for reasons of employment and thirty five withdrew or dropped out due to causes that were judged to be justifiable. For example, the Jackson County Campus Welding Program had enrolled 118 students during the two fiscal years. Nineteen continued into the 79 FY and nineteen meet all program requirements and graduated but forty six (46) dropped or withdrew for reasons of employment and eighteen dropped or withdrew due to causes that were judged to be justifiable. Only twenty one students from all five (see Table I, p. 3) programs studied dropped or withdrew due to lack of interest or excessive absences, etc.

IV SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The information recorded in appendix D-H was obtained in interviews of the program instructors and vocational counselor on the Jackson County Campus and the program instructors on the Perkinston Campus. It should be pointed out that these were the sources of information identified by the vocational-technical education directors of the two campuses. The campus sources supplied information that was compiled on the students while enrolled and placement follow-up records.

V CONCLUSIONS

The researcher concludes that open entry-open exit programs work. A substantial number of students enrolled at times other than the designated semester enrollment periods. Some did enroll at dates near the semester enrollment periods and it is believed that some would have enrolled had open entry not been available to them. However, it is known that prospective students for the vocational education programs that must wait substantially long periods to begin education and training will either change their occupational objective or find alternate avenues for the desired learning. A review of the summary (Table I, p. 3) and appendixes D-H reveals that substantial numbers of students were able to graduate and exit out to employment at staggered times during the period studied and substantial numbers of others were able to open-exit out to desired employment without graduation. The number dropped or that withdrew due to lack of interest or absences was not excessive.

More students can be served under an open-entry admission policy than can be served under a policy that admits students only at semester beginnings.

Under a semester enrollment policy enrollment is decreased. For example, vacancies created by dropouts in February would create vacancies that could not be filled until a new semester enrollment period begins. Many individuals who seek education and training in a vocational occupation will not wait several months for an admission period. To prove this point one only has to consult those programs that are to capacity and maintain waiting list to see how the availability of potential students diminish as long waiting periods are encountered.

MISSISSIPPI
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CENTRAL OFFICE

MEMO

TO: Executive Dean Clyde E. Strickland

FROM: Travis Ferguson

DATE: October 24, 1978

At President Hayden's request, I am doing a study on O/E programs in vocational education. The study will involve some programs on the Perkinston Campus.

I will be glad to discuss with you the details of the study if you desire; otherwise, I will proceed to work with Mr. Scarbrough and/or others that he may designate.

sf

xc: Dr. J. J. Hayden, Jr.
Mr. Robert L. Johnson
Mr. Boyce L. Breland
Mr. Herb Carnathan
Mr. B. J. Scarbrough

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GULF COAST JUNIOR COLLEGE
CENTRAL OFFICE

MEMO

TO: Executive Dean Curtis L. Davis

FROM: Travis Ferguson TF

DATE: October 24, 1978

At President Hayden's request, I am doing a study on O/E programs in vocational education. The study will involve some programs on the Jackson County Campus.

I will be glad to discuss with you the details of the study if you desire; otherwise, I will proceed to work with Mr. Shepherd and/or others that he may designate.

xc: Dr. J. J. Hayden, Jr.
Mr. Robert L. Johnson
Mr. Boyce L. Breland
Mr. Herb Carnathan
Mr. Jerold Shepherd

MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST JUNIOR COLLEGE

PROGRAM _____ TIME PERIOD _____

STUDENT'S NAME	ENROLLED		JOB PLACEMENT AND/OR OTHER COMMENTS

1. Dropped; 2. Graduated; 3. continued program into next fiscal year

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JUN 22 1979

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